



Newsletter for English Teachers May 2004

This Newsletter for English Teachers is a monthly publication by the Information Resource Centers in Germany. It focuses on American Studies topics of relevance to our academic audiences.

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50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

"We conclude that the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

—Chief Justice Earl Warren

On May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court announced its decision that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." The decision effectively denied the legal basis for segregation in Kansas and 20 other states with segregated classrooms and forever changed race relations in the United States. The 1954 United States Supreme Court decision in *Oliver L. Brown et.al. v. the Board of Education of Topeka (KS) et.al.* is among the most significant judicial turning points in the development of the United States.

President Speaks at Brown v Board of Education National Historic Site/May 17, 2004
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040517-4.html>

Secretary Paige Hails 50th Anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education/May 11, 2004
<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/05/05112004.html>

Landmark Supreme Court Cases - Brown vs. Board of Education 1954
<http://www.landmarkcases.org/brown/home.html>

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH

In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two important anniversaries: the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants (May 7, 1843) and the

completion of the transcontinental railroad (May 10, 1869). In 1992, Congress expanded the 10-day observance to a monthlong celebration.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated with community festivals, government-sponsored activities, and educational activities for students. This year's theme is "Freedom for All—A Nation We Call Our Own."

Asian American Heritage Month (Infoplease.com)

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/asianhistory1.html>

About the USA > Asian Americans

<http://www.usembassy.de/usa/society-asians.htm>

Facts on Asian Population

<http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/NEWapiML1.html>

Notable Asian Americans <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/asianambios.html>

- e.g. Maxine Hong Kingston <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0880531.html>
Her most recognized work is also her first published, *Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1976), and received the National Book Critic's Circle Award for nonfiction. *Woman Warrior* combines Chinese folk stories, myth, and her family's experience as immigrants in the United States.
- Gish Jen <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0880666.html>
Her novels and short stories frequently revisit the American dream, and her characters puzzle out their ethnic identity in touching, comic ways
- Amy Tan <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/people/A0847760.html>
The daughter of Chinese immigrants, she has taken for her theme the lives of Asian-Americans and the generational and cultural differences among them, concentrating on women's experiences. Tan's novels include *The Joy Luck Club* (1989), *The Kitchen God's Wife* (1991), and *The Hundred Secret Senses* (1995).

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 31, 2004

This holiday, on the fourth Monday of every May, is a day on which Americans honor the dead. Originally a day on which flags and flowers were placed on graves of soldiers who died in the American Civil War, it has become a day on which the dead of all wars and all other dead are remembered the same way. <http://www.usembassy.de/usa/holidays-memorial.htm>

- The origins of Memorial Day
<http://www.usembassy.de/usa/etexts/hol/vamemorialday.pdf>
- The Story of Taps <http://www.usembassy.de/usa/etexts/hol/vataps.pdf>
- The History of Memorial Day
<http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/memorial/memorial.html>
- Learn about the Civil War
<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/modules/civwar/index.cfm>
- The Civil War in the Classroom <http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/classroom/>

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

This year, 2004, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision. This landmark decision declared unconstitutional state statutes that required the segregation of public schools by race. It thus extended federal power to education, an area traditionally controlled by states and localities. Brown also signaled a new determination to interpret more broadly the Constitution's promise of equality before the law and began an era of active federal intervention to defend and guarantee the civil rights of all Americans.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2004&m=May&x=20040513165800jmnamdeirf0.2696344&t=livefeeds/wf-latest.html>

Facts for Features * Special Edition * Civil Rights Act of 1964: 40th Anniversary

http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/001800.html

LEWIS & CLARK BICENTENNIAL

On May 14, 1804, Capt. Meriwether Lewis and Lt. William Clark, charged by President Thomas Jefferson with finding a route to the Pacific Ocean, embarked from Camp Dubois, Ill., on the east bank of the Mississippi River, upstream from St. Louis. They were accompanied by a 33-member group skilled in botany, zoology and outdoor survival. The "Corps of Discovery" arrived at Oregon's Pacific coast in November of 1805 and returned to St. Louis on Sept. 23, 1806.

See also

- Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commemoration
<http://www.lewisandclark200.org/index.php?cID=>
- Time Special http://www.time.com/time/2002/lewis_clark/essay.html
- National Park Service: Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail
<http://www.nps.gov/lecl/>
- Lewis & Clark. The National Bicentennial Exhibit
<http://www.lewisandclarkexhibit.org/>
- Discovering Lewis & Clark <http://www.lewis-clark.org/>
- PBS.org: Lewis & Clark, the Journey of the Corps of Discovery, a documentary by Ken Burns <http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/index.html>
- Facts for Features: Lewis and Clark Bicentennial http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features/001718.html
- more recommended links
http://www.time.com/time/2002/lewis_clark/webguide.html

50/50 - THE FIFTY BIGGEST CHANGES IN THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

by Terry Golway, *American Heritage*, vol. 55, no. 1, February-March 2004

http://www.americanheritage.com/xml/2004/1/2004_1_dept_5050.xml

American Heritage is approaching its fiftieth birthday in December 2004 and has asked five prominent historians and cultural commentators to each pick 10 leading developments in American life in the last half-century. The series of articles begins with Terry Golway -- the political columnist for the New York Observer, selecting the ten biggest changes in politics among them the expansion of voting rights, television, the rising sunbelt, etc.

For events - please check

<http://www.usembassy.de/consular/leipzig/eventnew.htm>

www.usembassy.de/irc

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